

THE  
BOSTON MEDICAL AND SURGICAL  
JOURNAL.

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VOL. VII.] WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 5, 1832. [NO. 17.

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OBSERVATIONS ON CLUB-FEET.

M. DUPUYTREN lately exhibited at his clinical lecture an infant born in the Hôtel Dieu, having two strongly marked club-feet. The learned surgeon took the opportunity of making the observations which follow:

Club-foot is for the most part a congenital deformity, in which the foot is turned very much inwards, the sole being nearly perpendicular, and the external edge looking down, so that the individual rests upon it, or, when the deformity is very great, even on the outer ankle. At the same time, the cavity of the sole of the foot appears to be augmented. All these external phenomena have been well described by Scarpa and others. Scarpa and M. Cruveilheir have also occupied themselves with the interior appearances displayed by dissection, but none of them have sufficiently dwelt on the most important results of the club-foot—namely, the diminished nourishment and consequent atrophy of the limb.

Congenital club-foot is either limited to one or involves both members. In the former case, if the infant be examined very soon after its birth, the deformed foot is found to be rather smaller than the other, but the legs are of equal length. M. Dupuytren has had numerous opportunities of satisfying himself on this point. When both feet are affected, they are in general equal in point of development. This kind of premature atrophy, the unknown cause of which is probably connected with that of the deformity itself, produces as a consequence a secondary wasting, which extends to the entire limb, and the source of which may be better explained. In fact, the infant, from the day he begins to walk, constantly makes use of the sound limb chiefly, resting the weight of the body almost always upon it. The nutrition bears proportion to the exercise; while the other limb, almost unemployed, wastes, in consequence of its inactivity.

Now this atrophy takes place in two different ways, which have hitherto been confounded, but which ought to be distinguished. 1. The limb wastes in length; 2. It wastes in thickness. The wasting in breadth is but little manifested in the skeleton, though much in the muscles, and hence the weakness and thinness of the limb—a vexatious circumstance, it is true, but one which may be remedied by calling the parts into exercise. The atrophy as to length takes place both in the bones and in the muscles, but is developed in the skeleton, which is most important, and thence proceeds a shortening of the limb, which no remedy can

cure. The difference in length between the limbs increases in direct proportion to the age. Not perceptible at birth, it becomes obvious some years after ; and at the age of ten, M. Dupuytren has always found it well marked, and still more so at twenty, if no means of prevention have been adopted.

The shortening of the muscles and tendons, less considerable in general, becomes nevertheless irremediable after a certain time. Thus at twenty years the tendo-achillis has so lost its due length that when the foot has been brought to its natural direction the heel continues to be pulled upwards, so as to oblige the individual to have a very thick sole to the heel of his shoe, in order to be able to rest at all upon the part. It is therefore desirable to prevent as much as possible this shortening of the bones, because when it once takes place it is irremediable. According to these views, M. Dupuytren requested several practitioners who devote themselves especially to such cases, to begin the treatment immediately after birth : he sent four or five infants of very early age to an establishment for ‘ Orthopedic,’ where they remained not more than five or six weeks. The deformity was completely corrected, so that the children learned to walk in the usual manner ; and the limb never having lost its length, performed its functions in the usual manner. I witnessed the results, said M. Dupuytren—I kept the individuals in view—and ascertained that the deformity did not return ; and I affirm that, by treating club-foot thus early, the wasting of the limb may be avoided with certainty.

It may be added, that the younger the infant is, the more readily will the foot yield to pressure. In a new-born babe the hand of the surgeon is sufficient to restore its natural form to the foot, and that without causing any pain. A few months more, however, increases the difficulty ; and when the patient has passed his tenth year, machinery is required to accomplish the end in view. After twenty, even mechanical contrivances fail to be of service. This depends upon three principal circumstances : 1. The suppleness of the ligaments and muscles, which continues to diminish as the age increases ; 2. The increase of the difficulty itself ; 3. The imperfect conformation in which the bones are developed, which last is decidedly the most powerful cause.

In conclusion it may be stated, that the treatment of club-foot, if undertaken at birth, is easy and simple : it is both completely preventive and curative.

#### **ON THE USES OF CHLORIDES AND CHLORINE.**

BY A. CHEVALLIER.

[Translated for Silliman's Journal by Professor Griscom.]

THE employment of chlorine and chlorides in the arts of salubrity, in therapeutics, &c. has been so multiplied of latter time, it is conceived that benefit will arise from a statement of their uses at the present period.

1. The use of chloride of lime in destroying the *odor of fresh paint*. For this purpose the chloride is found to be effectual. *Method.*—Provide shelves or boards about three feet long and two wide. Over them

spread some hay slightly moistened. Powder this hay with the chloride, and leave it a few days in the apartment newly painted, and carefully closed. The chlorine emanating from the chloride from the decomposing action of the carbonic acid of the atmosphere, will spread through the apartments and neutralize the odor of the paint.

If it be desirable also to remove the dampness of the apartment, a few pieces of chloride of calcium (or muriate of lime), placed in earthen dishes in the room, will answer the purpose.

It is wrong in such a case to use fresh lime along with the chloride, because the latter is effectual only in proportion as the chlorine is disengaged by the action of the carbonic acid and moisture of the air, and the presence of quick lime only serves to attract the same things, and therefore to retard the decomposition of the chloride.

The same purpose, as it regards odor, may be effected by the separation of chlorine gas, by placing an earthen cup, containing an ounce of oxide of manganese and three ounces of hydrochloric (muriatic) acid, on a hot brick, or over a furnace with a few live coals, or in a vessel of hot water, stirring the materials, and closing the apartment for twenty-four hours.

By heating in the same manner chloride of lime, dissolved in or mixed with water sharpened with sulphuric acid, the same purpose is effected.

#### 2. The use of chloride in correcting the unhealthiness of *manufactories of cat-gut, or other fabrics from animal materials.*

Manufactories of this nature are apt to emit a highly disagreeable odor. The free use of chlorine, liberated in the way above indicated, will effectually correct the unhealthy emanations.

#### 3. In disinfecting *the mud and filth of sewers.*

Agreeably to the experimental investigations of a committee chosen by the police, it appears that it would require 576 grammes of dry chloride of lime to disinfect one cubic foot of semi-fluid mud, weighing 10 kilogrammes; or 620 grammes of chloride, one foot of more solid filth weighing 10 kilogrammes 50 decagrammes.

The expense, therefore, deduced from these data, of disinfecting sewers which have become very foul, is considered to be too great, even at the reduced price of chloride of lime, and they therefore prefer the purification by ventilation through the agency of fire.

#### 4. In disinfecting the air of rooms in *which silk worms are kept.*

The experiments of M. Bonafous, very carefully conducted, have proved that silk worms, exposed to the putrid exhalations of their litter and excrements, to the odor of dead worms, &c. will be injured or destroyed by these and other unwholesome effluvia, much sooner than if their apartments are seasoned by the corrective influence of chlorine. The gas, however, must be very gently and slowly liberated, or its effects will be too powerful. The method recommended is to place in a dish or vessel one part of chloride of lime and about thirty parts of water, or an ounce of chloride with a quart of water, with such a quantity of worms as will issue from an ounce of grains (eggs). Stir the materials, and when precipitated renew the water, and repeat the operation two or three times in twenty-four hours, as necessity requires. The chloride is to be changed only as it ceases to yield an odor.

In this operation it appears that the carbonic acid arising from the fermenting materials, unites with the lime, and sets the chlorine free, which by its avidity for hydrogen decomposes the miasms which it meets with.

This mode of fumigation does not remove the necessity of frequently renewing the air of the chambers, and of promoting its currents by fires.

5. In removing from urine, and the vessels employed to receive it, the disagreeable odor emitted from them.

It is well known that the odor of urine (which is at first aromatic, and often partakes of the smell of the food, especially after eating asparagus, cauliflower, peas, &c.) becomes exceedingly repulsive and communicates its effects to the vessels containing it.

These odors are completely removed by a small portion of chlorine. Thus, half a gallon of urine which would not lose all its odor by being treated with four ounces of acetic acid, would yield it by the addition of six, eight, or at most ten drops of chlorine or chloride of lime.

If night tables and other utensils of a room which may have absorbed the odor of urine contained in chamber vessels be washed with a sponge dipped in a solution prepared by adding an ounce of chloride of lime to a gallon of water, they will be preserved from taint.

6. In destroying the gases which blacken silver and bronze vessels, and varnish containing metallic oxides. It has happened that in emptying privies and in other analogous operations, the effluvia has produced disagreeable effects on furniture and metallic surfaces. This may be completely prevented by suspending cloths soaked in a solution of chloride in the apartment, or placing them in the apertures through which the gas issues.

It has happened that in our two manufactories of porcelain ware, the white enamel of the vessels, by being incidentally exposed to a rupture of foul emanations of this nature before it was perfectly dry, has become very much discolored. A remedy has been found in opposing solutions of chlorine to the current of sulphuretted hydrogen, although the emanations have continued for weeks together.

7. In destroying emanations that may occasion a plague.

M. Felix D'Arcet, a member of the committee sent to Egypt in order to make experiments relative to the plague, furnished M. de Lasteyrie with the following details extracted from a letter from Tripoli of June 14, 1829.

'The most important point to be determined was whether the pestilential virus could resist the action of the chlorides.'

'The Vice Consul of France obtained for us six garments of persons who died of the plague, all within the last two days. These garments were soiled with blood, sanguis, and sweat. After the Consul had taken an account of their condition, I immersed them during sixteen hours in a solution of chloride of sodium, and after drying them, each of us put on a shirt next to our skin, and then the remains of the dress. The spots still existed on them, but much faded. We slept in these garments, and after wearing them eighteen hours, replaced them. It is a week since the experiment, and neither of us have experienced the least change. Our natural constitutions are also, it may be remarked, very different.'

It was proposed by M. Pariset that the effect of chlorine should be tried on other contagious diseases, and accordingly three experiments were made with it in relation to the measles. The chamber of a child, exposed to the measles, was disinfected, and his shirt was dipped in a solution of one ounce of liquid and concentrated chloride of lime, and three gallons of water. When dried it exhaled, very slightly, the odor of chlorine. He escaped the infection.

8. In the cure of epidemic diseases among dumb creatures.

In 1829 an epidemic malady broke out among fowls in the vicinity of Paris. The disease spread rapidly, manifesting itself by an inflammation of the head, tears in the eyes, blueness of the skin, and the issue of blood from the beak. The animals soon sunk under it. Bleeding and other means of restoration were employed without effect. The author being consulted, directed the chickens which were still unaffected to be placed in an enclosure by themselves, and those on which the disease had made some progress, in another enclosure. These places being then sprinkled with chloride of lime, the healthy fowls remained healthy, and the others were successively restored to health.

The same remedy was applied by M. Capliu, at Vaugirard. The fowls were preserved from the epidemic, and the sick were soon restored.

The solution employed on these occasions was prepared by adding two ounces of chloride of lime to half a gallon of water, carefully mixing, filtering the solution, preserving it in well-closed bottles, and using it as occasion required. The cause of this Epizootic was not ascertained, but it was perceived that the fowls which were confined in roosts exposed to the north were not attacked by it.

In a letter from M. Recluz, pharmacien at Vaugirard, it is stated that during an epidemic among the fowls at that place, it was found that those feeders who were careful to keep their fowl-yards clean, and who put clean straw in their roosts and stables, preserved their stock from the attack; whence it was inferred that the disease arose from the effluvia of putrefaction from the dung which was suffered to accumulate on the floors. In one instance fifteen fowls out of twenty-three had died of the infection, and three more were sick. The yard or roost was then well cleaned, washed with common water, and then sprinkled twice a day with a solution of one ounce of chloride in a pint of water. From that time not a fowl died. Similar results were obtained by other persons, one of whom stated that when he commenced the use of the chlorides, all his fowls were sick, and from the time of the first sprinkling with it they all recovered. M. Recluz regrets very much that he had not had recourse to the same remedy in a disease among cows at Vaugirard. A single dairy man lost nine of his cows in two months, without perceiving whence the sickness proceeded.

The chloride has also been successfully used in disinfecting the pens or casks in which rabbits are kept. The solution is applied with a brush, and the casks are drained before the rabbits are returned. Some which were very sick and refused to eat, were restored promptly by this disinfection.

9. In the treatment of tainted fish.

When tainted fish are treated with chlorine, they are said to exhale an

odor of bromine ; but the author states that on applying chloride of lime to a spoiled turbot, the odor was different both from that of chlorine and of bromine. The fish was washed, and on being cooked the smell disappeared, and it was eaten. Whence he infers that the odor from fish disinfected by chloride is not injurious to the health like that from putrid fish.

The baskets and other utensils used by fishermen may be deprived of the unpleasant odor which they contract, by the use of the chlorides.

**10. In the exhumation and removal of bodies which have been for some time buried.**

It is proposed that on occasions of this nature, when putrefaction has doubtless occurred, after opening the grave, to water the excavation and ground adjacent with a strong solution of chloride; to lay a cloth wet with the solution over the coffin; to place the coffin in a box on the bottom of which is a layer six inches thick, of a mixture of fifteen parts of charcoal in coarse powder, and one part of dry chloride of lime, and to surround the sides and top with the same mixture. With such a precaution the exhumation and removal to a great distance of a corpse long buried may be safely effected.—*Journal de Connaissances Usuelles.*

**TWO CASES OF CHOLERA.**

[Communicated for the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.]

**JOHN FALVEY**, aged 7 years, son of Irish parents, living in Leman's yard on the north side of Fort Hill, on the morning of the 19th Sept. at 5 o'clock, was seized with severe purging. Had three evacuations, the appearance of which was not noticed ; vomiting then came on and continued with the purging. Some wine and water was given him. At 8 he was seen by a physician ; no vomiting or purging after this time. At 11 found in bed, with heated substances about him. Face pale; features rather contracted ; lividity not great ; countenance anxious ; voice hoarse ; eyes sunken ; tongue and breath cold ; calls very urgently for water ; complains of distress at epigastrium, of what nature could not be determined. Surface colder than natural over whole extent, except abdominal region. Lower extremities more so than upper. No distinct spasms present. Jactitation very great, rendering it difficult to keep him in position favorable to warmth. Some mucous discharge was observed under him during visit ; when passed could not be ascertained. Was very soon annoyed by sinapisms to calves of legs, which when freed from these continued very sensible and appeared reddened, but the temperature not increased. Expressed uneasy feeling about legs, as if he had the sensation of cramp. Pulse sometimes imperceptible at wrists during two hours ; when felt, found beating about 180 ; very thready ; never became full. Decided change for the worse commenced at 1 o'clock. Death occurred at 5.

**Possible causes.**—His mother reports that yesterday morning his breakfast was not provided for him as usual, and that he ate several apples instead. At noon he again ate apples, but had some dinner. Supper, &c. as usual. Had two stools during day.

The following is a brief statement of the first case of cholera received into the Fort Hill Hospital, in Boston.

Name—Joanna Ryan. Age—50. Abode—Broad Street. Employment—unknown. Previous habits—irregular. Admitted September 13th. Discharged September 18th. Result—cured.

This woman was brought from a cellar in Broad Street which has been occasionally overflowed at high tides, but is reported in good order at present. She is but little known to the people with whom she has boarded ; but is supposed to have lived irregularly, and to have drank some during the past week. She is also said to have had diarrhoea during the same period ; but to what extent cannot be ascertained.

When seen at half past 5, P. M. was in state of collapse, pulse at wrists perfectly imperceptible. Skin cold, dry, particularly of hands, feet and knees. Voice very feeble ; not otherwise remarkable. No vomiting or nausea present. Had one dejection before 12. The means employed at the outset were principally the application of dry heat, friction, and the exhibition of a laudanised potion every 15 minutes for 8 hours. At midnight had had no burning at epigastrium, and no distinct spasms. The urine is secreted in small quantities. At this time had slight subsultus tendinum, which was occasionally observable afterward. Before sunrise symptoms of reaction became very evident ; the pulse rose and the skin acquired an increase of temperature. In the forenoon the pulse became fuller and harder, and some perspiration was present. This day the laudanum was stopped, and she had a cathartic which operated once. In the afternoon decided febrile action, with great drowsiness. When roused and questioned, expresses herself comfortable. Had an injection, which produced little effect. Afterward was ordered a cathartic, which produced profuse discharges, first spontaneous and then involuntary, checked only by several doses of laudanum. Restless in the evening, and seemed worse.

15th, 6 o'clock. Apparently under the influence of the laudanum ; very heavy ; appeared to have some delirium, but this point is not easily determined. Expresses herself free from pain.

During the forenoon her appearance improved. Towards evening expressed herself uneasy. Some increase of heat and pulse. In the evening was calm again.

16th. Comfortable through the day. From this time went on improving.

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#### CLINICAL NOTES.

BY JONATHAN SIBLEY, M.D. OF UNION, MAINE.

[Communicated for the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.]

#### *Protrusion of the Brain.*

NOVEMBER 1st, 1812, I visited a boy wounded in the head by the kick of a colt. I found the integuments divided, the skull fractured and depressed, and a small quantity of the brain had issued from the wound. As I had never had much experience in cases of this kind, and was not

furnished with suitable instruments to perform the necessary operation, I sent an express to Waldoborough, for Dr. Brown. When he arrived, twenty-four hours after the accident, the lad was to appearance perfectly well. During the preceding night he had eaten and slept as well as at any period of his life, and in the morning was quite playful. When he was asked if his head ached, he would say—‘a little.’ The parents and friends of the child were at this time very unwilling to have anything done for him, saying, ‘the boy will do well enough.’ However, they were finally prevailed on to substitute the opinion of others for their own, and Dr. B. was permitted to go on with the operation. The head being shaved and the teguments divided with the knife, a piece of the frontal bone over the left eye, about two inches in length, of an oval shape, was found broken from the skull, and one side of it much depressed. After perforating the cranium in two places with the trephine, the loosened piece of bone was removed. It was not the intention of the operator, at first, to remove entirely the fractured and depressed portion of the skull—only to elevate it to its natural position ; presuming there might be bloodvessels in the dura mater sufficient to nourish and keep alive this piece of the cranium till it could be united by the ossifying matter to the original bone. But too great force being applied to the levator, the depressed piece burst through the orifice, the dura mater was ruptured, and the intention of the operator defeated. Two other small pieces of bone were removed at the same time. The dura mater being broken, the cortical part of the brain was much exposed to view, and a small part lost previous to and during the operation.

In this operation the temporal artery, with some others of a smaller size, was divided, and discharged a sufficient quantity of blood for the good of the patient. The divided integuments were brought over the wound and secured with stitches, the whole dressed with dry lint, and the patient put to bed in a dark room.

On the third day after the operation the inflammation and delirium deprived the friends of all hopes of life. On the fourth day the fever abated, and the wound was dressed, when it was discovered that the brain was protruding very largely through the wound in the dura mater into the opening of the skull. From this time the wound discharged freely, and the boy mended daily. In about ten days after the operation the brain had protruded through the skull about an inch, entirely filling up the space in the cranium from which the fractured pieces of bone had been taken. This tumor cast off purulent matter freely from its surface, about four weeks, when it was reduced to one half its largest size. Pressure was then applied, which entirely removed it in a few days without any injury to the patient. The boy, in two months after the operation, was as hearty and sprightly as he ever was, and suffered no inconvenience from the injury, except on the tender part of the head, which was deprived of bone.

#### *Strangulated Hernia.*

A young man who had been troubled with hernia from his youth applied to me for assistance. I purchased for him one of Stone’s patent trusses, which he wore a few years, when it was accidentally broken and

thrown aside as useless. So much of the contents of the abdomen as had been kept in their place by the truss, would occasionally descend into the scrotum, and were returned again through the abdominal ring by the man himself. About a year from the time the truss was thrown aside, a portion of intestine descended into the scrotum while the man was driving a team in the field, which could not be returned again in the usual way. Strangulation immediately ensued, and I was called to visit the patient. I found the man in great pain and the tumor very tender to the touch, notwithstanding it had been formed only three or four hours. After spending about an hour in unavailing attempts at reduction, I informed the patient and friends as well as I could of the nature of the case and danger attending it, and advised them to send for Dr. Brown, who was considered the best operator in the country at that time. While we were all impatiently waiting for his arrival, I made use of various means for reduction, not all of which I suspect were best calculated to accomplish so desirable an object. I had not at that time heard of Gimbernet, the Spanish surgeon, nor had I any idea of his method of practice in cases of this kind ; we all labored, as well as we could, in the old way. The man was suspended by the feet, and after that put into warm water ; but these means did no good. A cathartic was worse than useless. Clysters of tobacco evacuated the rectum, and gave only temporary relief.

Dr. Brown arrived twenty-four hours after the descent of the intestine into the scrotum—made a slight examination, and gave his opinion that it was expedient to operate immediately.

Preparation being made for the operation, a table was placed in the middle of the room, to which the patient walked, and laid himself thereon. The parts being shaved, an incision was made nearly the whole length of the tumor, and the hernial sac laid open at the lower part. A small quantity of water appeared. The hernial sac was then laid open the whole length of the incision, and the abdominal ring divided with the probe-pointed bistoury. The intestine—as highly inflamed, perhaps, as it was possible for animal fibres to be—Dr. Brown held up to my view upon his finger, and said, ‘what shall I do ?’ I instantly replied, ‘let it go,’ and he immediately returned the intestine into the abdomen. The cathartic which had been previously given soon opera, and the man with a cheerful countenance was carried to bed.

When the operation was finished, and all was calm and still, then was the time for us to reflect upon the scene which had passed before us, and to review our conduct. We feared we had been too precipitate in returning the inflamed intestine into the abdomen ; for should mortification take place upon it, the contents of the alimentary canal would all be discharged into the abdomen, and the patient be lost—whereas, had we secured the intestine in the wound, mortification might have taken place, and the patient survive and continue to live with an artificial opening for the discharge of the excrements. But our fears were never verified ; the wound soon healed, and the man was well, but not sound. He had occasion for a truss again.

## INFLUENCE OF OCCUPATION ON HEALTH.—NO. II.

[Communicated for the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.]

I SHALL now consider some of the trades which belong to the present class, and the first I shall mention is that of

**SHOEMAKERS.** The evils arising from vicious position and partial employment of muscles are remarkably exemplified in these individuals. They sit very low, with the body much bent and the head stooping forward, for the convenience of their work. In this way the liver and other organs within the great cavity are compressed, and the free circulation of the blood is prevented. They are also obliged, in using the last, to press it against the cartilaginous substance which forms the lower part of the breast bone, and corresponds in position with the pit of the stomach. By this pressure the xiphoid cartilage is forced inward, and a hollow is produced, sensible both to the touch and the eye. In this way injury is inflicted both on the stomach and the chest, shown in the latter by cough and shortness of breath, and in the former by loss of appetite and rejection of food. Those employed in this trade for a large number of hours daily, without intervening exercise in the open air, can hardly fail to become unhealthy. It happens, too, unfortunately, that when recreation is resorted to, and a day is borrowed from the week for this purpose, as is the custom with many, it is passed in pernicious indulgence, which instead of recruiting the system, only renders it more susceptible to the injurious effects of the succeeding employment. The rooms in which shoemakers work are often hot and ill ventilated, a circumstance which aggravates the evils of confinement. The obvious means of palliating the bad effects of this trade, is to take daily exercise in the open air, in the intervals of labor. In practice, however, this proves extremely difficult; and many find it a less effort to make an occasional exchange of the occupation for several months at a time, for some one which may be pursued in the open air.

I have observed in some manufactories a very simple contrivance, by which the work is secured to the surface of a block, four or five feet in height, in such a manner as to be conveniently commanded by the workman while standing, so that the evils arising from position and from pressure are at once avoided. I believe this mode is principally adopted by those who have found their health impaired in the ordinary mode of conducting the process. In those portions of the work to which it is applicable, its more general adoption would, I think, be attended with benefit, and serve to diminish the inconveniences and evils of the trade.

2. The evil arising from position in the occupation of the **TAILOR** is even greater than in that which has just been described. Sitting cross-legged on his bench, a posture which the nature of the work renders indispensable, he plies his needle for hour after hour without respite, while the circulation in the lower limbs is seriously interfered with, thus depriving them of their growth and proper development, if not inflicting more serious injury. The blood thus impeded in its course, is thrown

unduly upon the heart, and causes embarrassment of the functions of that organ. The exercise which the employment furnishes is insufficient as well as partial ; and in large establishments the work is pursued in crowded, badly ventilated and heated apartments. From all these causes, the business of a working tailor becomes, after a certain time, more or less prejudicial. The appetite is impaired, the thirst unduly increased, the powers of digestion diminished, the limbs enfeebled. These effects are less obvious with us, partly because the causes do not exist to the same degree, and partly because a sufficiently extensive field of observation is seldom presented at one view. But in large establishments abroad, the injurious influence thus exerted is exceedingly manifest. In the extensive establishment of Schultz & Co. of London, in which more than 300 workmen are employed, it is stated that only six of this number are above 60 years of age, fourteen above 50, and the greater part of the remainder about 40. Of the six above mentioned, three have curvature of the spine. Their most common affections are indigestion, disorder of the bowels, and dull headache with giddiness, especially during the summer. They attribute their complaints to two causes ; one, the constrained position which the occupation requires ; the other, the heat of the shop. At one examination of this point, the temperature of the room was 98 deg., with that of the open air 76 deg. At another, the internal temperature was 108 deg. while that abroad was 84 deg. Tailors are the most intemperate men in London. A large number die annually of consumption.

Such is a picture of the state of this class in a crowded city. We may hope and believe that our own exhibits nothing to compare with it. The evils, however, if not to the same extent, are the same in kind, and deserve the consideration of those who employ a number of hands in this business. As respects the heat of the working rooms, it is said that the preparation of the heated irons employed in pressing requires the presence of fire at all seasons, and that this circumstance necessarily contributes to the elevation of the temperature. But it seems natural to suppose, that except during the hottest weather, the effect of this source of caloric might be neutralized by improved arrangements, and especially by proper ventilation. The subject at least is deserving of inquiry. With respect to the spinal curvature mentioned above, although the tendency of the employment certainly is to produce this deformity, yet the fact is as certain as it is remarkable, that where the resolution and vigor are present to prevent the tailor from yielding to the inclination to stoop, the very exertion required to resist it strengthens the muscles of the back, and he becomes remarkably erect. The circumstance of corpulency, which might be supposed to favor this tendency, has often a contrary effect. The weight on one side induces the exertion of a counteracting force on the other ; much as a bag of sand placed upon the head, by its tendency to carry it down, forms a constant inducement to resistance, and thus eminently contributes to maintain it in its proper position.

As respects the means of preventing the evils incident to this employment, I should, in suggesting them, scarce do more than repeat the remarks made upon the same subject in considering the last mentioned trade. A French writer, in pointing out the best employment for tailors

in their leisure hours, strongly urges the advantages of running, leaping, swimming, and particularly dancing, which last may be accounted the sovereign<sup>st</sup> thing of all. In fact, daily and regular exercise, and the avoiding of excess and imprudent exposure, include nearly all the advice which can be given, and unfortunately far more than is likely to be followed. Attention to these circumstances, however, in those possessed originally of sound constitutions, will work wonders. I have seen an individual who has followed up this occupation for fifty-five years, and who, at the age of 70, is still able to wield the needle and the shears, in the enjoyment of almost if not altogether perfect health. Without gaining entire exemption from the evils of his employment, he has found them temporary only ; and his constitution gradually suiting itself to the circumstances in which he was placed, he has suffered scarcely any inconvenience from the trade for many years.

## CAPSICUM.

*To the Editor of the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.*

SIR,—If you could induce Professor Tully, or any one of your correspondents who is familiar with the article, to furnish you with a dissertation upon *capsicum*, you might probably be of more service to the profession than by giving to the public the same quantity of matter upon almost any other subject. It has long been pretty extensively and very advantageously employed as a gargle, in angina maligna, and other affections of the throat. It is also considerably used in some complaints of the stomach, and in the latter stages of most typhoid diseases. I have, however, considered it as more valuable in *passive hemorrhage* than perhaps any single article of the *materia medica*. In this case, it may be employed in doses of three to five grains in pill, and may be repeated every ten or fifteen minutes, to the third or fourth time, in almost any instance of a sudden profuse loss of blood, whether it is from the lungs, uterus, nose, stomach, or rectum. It generally answers when given alone, but its effect is usually more certain when each dose is combined with one or two grains of sugar of lead, and half a grain or a grain of opium.

Notwithstanding *capsicum* is so very important in hemorrhage, I do not know that its stiptic property is mentioned in the common treatises upon *materia medica* ; and I suspect that the number of practitioners who employ it in this way, is very limited.

Should this hint serve to call forth some abler pen to furnish a dissertation upon the subject, my end will be answered. SENEX.

**D**igitalis is another article, the uses of which in hemorrhage and other diseases we should be pleased to see set forth by some experienced correspondent.—**EDITOR.**

## BOSTON MEDICAL AND SURGICAL JOURNAL.

BOSTON, DECEMBER 5, 1832.

## THE CHOLERA AT SOUTH BOSTON.

THIS disease has recently broken out in the House of Industry, or Alms House, at South Boston, and is still finding there daily victims. The following note from the physician of that establishment, to the Editor, will afford the best information respecting the extent and fatality of the disease.

*House of Industry, December 2, 1832.*

DEAR SIR,—In compliance with your request I send you a brief abstract of the cases of malignant cholera which have occurred in this Institution within the last fortnight.

There have been forty-one cases, of which number twenty-six have died—namely, twelve aged persons, seven insane, and seven children. Of the sixteen remaining cases, eight have recovered from collapse, and are now suffering from consecutive fever; six of the eight will, I think, recover. Very many of the inmates have been troubled with vomiting and purging, and it is my firm belief that a large number of cases have been prevented by prompt attention to the premonitory symptoms.

My unremitting attendance here prevents me from giving you any further details at this time; but it is my intention to give you, very shortly, a statement of the manner of attack, the phenomena of the disease, the different kinds of treatment I have adopted, the peculiarities which I have noticed, and the appearances presented in post-mortem examinations.

Very truly, your friend,  
JOHN C. HOWARD.

## HEALTH OF NEW ORLEANS.

We are equally surprised and gratified at the very sudden cessation of the cholera and yellow fever at New Orleans. The occurrence of cold weather seemed to be the cause of this most happy change, and it is the less explicable since the former disease, as we have before remarked, has not shown in Europe such immediate and entire submission to the season. We expect, before many weeks, to lay before the reader a somewhat detailed account of the mode in which the malady commenced, prevailed, and terminated in that city.

## THE JOURNAL OF HEALTH.

THIS Journal, which has hitherto been in an extraordinary degree popular throughout the Union, has recently fallen into the hands of another publisher, and the word Recreation is added to its title. This indicates

a judicious change in the character of the work. The subjects strictly hygienic, that can be made interesting to the general reader, are limited. These subjects have been taken up and discussed by a succession of Journals of *Popular Medicine*; but all of them, in this country and in England, have had a short life and a merry one. By the addition now made to the title of the Philadelphia work, a wide field and an agreeable one is opened to the editors, just as that, they have so long and ably and successfully occupied, was becoming barren. The publication is also made once, instead of twice, in each month; and the last numbers seem to be well filled with a variety of interesting and useful pieces, both original and extracted.

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#### AMERICAN BOARDS OF HEALTH.

UNDER the above title we find the following remarks in the London Medical Gazette :—

It is curious to observe how frequently republican forms of government, with freedom as their idol, contrive, in some way or other, to display the most arbitrary propensities. Among us there has been, on several occasions, an outcry against the attempts of the government to carry into effect the measures requisite for acquiring accurate information as to the extent of the present epidemic, and for staying its progress, although the plans actually adopted have never been more than the necessities of the case obviously pointed out. Our friends in America proceed in a much more summary manner; the most rigid returns are enforced, stating the name and residence of every patient, under heavy penalties; and the power vested in the Boards of Health may be judged of from the resolutions of one of them, which now lies before us, in which any person who has been in a house which a cholera patient has inhabited, and who shall presume to enter the town of Hudson, shall be fined 100 dollars and imprisoned for three months. A pretty strong measure this—we guess. The opinion that the disease is contagious seems to be general, if not universal, in America.

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*Case of 'Tremblement Mercuriel,' or Mercurial Affection from the process of Gilding, successfully treated by the Administration of Conium.*—Richard Brown, aged 35, of spare habit, but good constitution, was admitted into St. Bartholomew's Hospital, under the care of Mr. Earle, on the 1st of September last. He had been from his youth employed in gilding; from which occupation, however, he had never experienced any disorder or ill effects until a fortnight prior to his admission into the hospital, when, after a day of unusually laborious work, he was suddenly seized with cramps in the fingers, which were shortly followed by a shaking and tremulous motion of both upper extremities. They were slight at first, but gradually increased, so as to become very distressing. This agitation of the muscles continued even during sleep, and was accompanied with a gnawing pain, as he expressed it. With the exception of slight pain and heat about the head, his general health was not much affected.

During the last four days, mild purgatives were given him, and leeches, with cold evaporating lotions, applied to the head.

September 6th.—The symptoms have become still more general, the lower extremities having been affected the previous evening, so that, in fact, the whole body appeared in constant motion. The bowels rather costive, but entirely free from pain. Towards the latter part of the day, the tremulous motion of the muscles of the right arm subsided, but the limb remained almost paralysed. Ordered Ol. Ricini, 3 ss. ; Ext. Conii, gr. v. fiat pil. j. ter die sumenda.

From the day on which he commenced the conium, the patient experienced a gradual remission of his symptoms, and at the expiration of about ten days they had almost entirely subsided. At this time, 'pilulas panis' were substituted for the conium, when the patient immediately fell into the same state; the symptoms recurring in perhaps a still more aggravated degree. The conium was again administered, and with its former good effect. He has just left the hospital, apparently quite well. He was, however, recommended to continue the use of the conium for a week or two longer.

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*Effect of Disease on Memory.*—Failure of memory takes place in a variety of ways. It is sometimes general, and extends to every subject; but it is frequently far more manifest on some subjects than on others. Salmuth mentions a case in which the affected person had forgotten to pronounce words, but could nevertheless write them. Mr. J. Hunter was suddenly attacked with a singular affection of this kind, in December 1789, when on a visit at the house of a friend in town. 'He did not know in what part of the house he was, not even the name of the street when told it, nor where his own house was: he had not a conception of anything existing beyond the room he was in, and yet was perfectly conscious of the loss of memory. He was sensible of impressions of all kinds from the senses, and therefore looked out of the window, although rather dark, to see if he could be made sensible of the situation of the house. This loss of memory gradually went off, and in less than half an hour it was perfectly recovered.' This might possibly be connected with a gouty habit to which Mr. Hunter was subject, though not at this time laboring under a paroxysm. The late Bishop of Landaff, Dr. Watson, gives a singular case of partial amnesia in his father, the result of an apoplectic attack. 'I have heard him ask twenty times a-day,' says Dr. Watson, '"What is the name of the lad that is at college?" (my elder brother); and yet he was able to repeat, without a blunder, hundreds of lines out of classic authors.' And hence, there is no reason for discrediting the story of a German statesman, a Mr. Von B., related in the seventh volume of the *Psychological Magazine*, who having called at a gentleman's house, the servants of which did not know him, was under the necessity of giving in his name; but unfortunately at that moment he had forgotten it, and excited no small laughter by turning round to a friend who accompanied him, and saying with great earnestness, 'Pray tell me who I am, for I cannot recollect.'

From severe suffering of the head in many fevers, a great inroad is frequently made upon the memory, and it is long before the convalescent can rightly put together all the ideas of his past life. Such was one of the effects of the plague at Athens, as we learn from Thucydides; 'many, on recovery, still experienced such an extraordinary oblivion of all things, that they knew neither themselves nor their friends.' A few years ago, a man with a brain fever was taken into St. Thomas's Hospital,

who, as he grew better, spoke to his attendants, but in a language they did not understand. A Welsh milk-woman going by accident into the ward, heard him, answered him and conversed with him. It was then found that the patient was by birth a Welshman, but had left his native land in his youth, forgotten his native dialect, and used English for the last thirty years. Yet, in consequence of this fever, he had now forgotten the English tongue, and suddenly recovered the Welsh.

Boerhaave, however, gives a still more extraordinary instance of oblivion in the case of a Spanish tragic author, who had composed many excellent pieces, but so completely lost his memory in consequence of an acute fever, that he forgot not only the languages he had formerly learnt, but even the alphabet; and was hence under the necessity of beginning to read again. His own poems and compositions were shown to him, but he could not be persuaded that they were his productions. Afterwards, however, he began once more to compose verses; which had so striking a resemblance to his former writings, that he at length became convinced of his being the author of them.

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*The Ornithorhynchus Paradoxus.*—The following interesting fact in natural history was communicated by Dr. Weatherhead, to the committee of science of the Zoological Society, at their last meeting.

For the last five-and-twenty years naturalists in Europe have been striving to obtain the carcass of the impregnated female *Ornithorhynchus Paradoxus*, for the purpose of ascertaining its mode of gestation, but without success; for it is by dissection alone that the hitherto doubtful and disputed point concerning the anomalous and paradoxical manner of bringing forth and rearing its young can be satisfactorily demonstrated. This long-sought-for desideratum is at length attained. Through the kindness of his friend, Lieut. the honorable Lauderdale Maule, of the 39th regiment, Dr. Weatherhead has had the bodies of several *ornithorhynchi* transmitted to him from New Holland, in one of which the ova were preserved; establishing, along with other curious circumstances ascertained, the extraordinary fact, that this animal, which combines the bird and quadruped together in its outward form, lays eggs and hatches them like the one, and rears and suckles them like the other.—*Proc. Zool. Soc.*

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*Sir W. Russell and Sir D. Barry.*—These gentlemen have recently received, through Prince Lieven, diplomas constituting them honorary members of the Imperial Academy of Medicine and Surgery of St. Petersburgh. His Majesty the Emperor had already conferred upon them the collar of the order of St. Anne of Russia.

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The Publishers of the Medical Journal would respectfully give notice to those subscribers who are indebted to them, that remittances will be particularly acceptable during the present month.

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Whole number of deaths in Boston for the week ending Dec. 1, 43. Males, 19—Females, 24.  
Of consumption, 6—dropsy on the chest, 3—inflammation of the lungs, 1—dysentery, 1—intermission, 1—brain fever, 1—cholera malignant, 19\*—infantile, 1—typhous fever, 1—old age, 1—croup, 2—inflammation in the bowels, 1—scarlet fever, 1—throat distemper, 1—fits, 1.

\* In the House of Industry, at South Boston.

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#### THE BOSTON MEDICAL AND SURGICAL JOURNAL

IS PRINTED AND PUBLISHED EVERY WEDNESDAY, BY CLAPP AND BULL,  
At 184 Washington Street, corner of Franklin Street, to whom all communications must be addressed,  
*Post-paid.* It is also published in Monthly Parts, on the 1st of each month, each Part containing the  
numbers of the preceding month, stitched in a cover.—Price \$3.00 per annum in advance, \$2.50 if not  
paid within six months, and \$4.00 if not paid within the year.—*Postage the same as for a newspaper.*